

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCUEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1708

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PINS MILI PO
SUBJECT: COMMUNISTS RAISE SPECTER OF CHILEAN-STYLE
DESTABILIZATION

REF: LISBON 1602 (DTG 010728Z MAR 77), LISBON IR 6 879 0071 77
(DTG 181218Z FEB 77)

SUMMARY: CHARGES BY CENTRAL MILITARY REGION COMMANDER HUGO
DOS SANTOS THAT THE COMMUNISTS ARE SUBVERTING THE ARMED
FORCES HAVE SPARKED A PCP COUNTEROFFENSIVE. THE PCP HAS
ASSERTED THAT A CHILEAN-STYLE DESTABILIZATION CAMPAIGN IS
UNDER WAY, AIDED BY THE PS GOVERNMENT POLICY OF CAPITALIST
RECOVERY. END SUMMARY.

1. THE SHIBBOLETH OF DESTABILIZATION: RECENT CHARGES BY
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CENTRAL MILITARY REGION COMMANDER HUGO DOS SANTOS OF
STEPPED UP COMMUNIST EFFORTS TO SUBVERT THE ARMED FORCES
HAVE PROMPTED ASSERTIONS OF RIGHTIST SUBVERSION
ATTEMPTS BY LISBON MILITARY REGION COMMANDER VASCO
LOURENCO AND A PCP COUNTEROFFENSIVE.
-- VASCO LOURENCO RAPS THE RIGHT: LISBON MILITARY REGION
COMMANDER VASCO LOURENCO HAS FUELED THE GROWING CONTROVERSY

BY ASSERTING PUBLICLY MAR 2 THAT THE REAL SUBVERSIVE THREAT
CAME NOT FROM THE LEFT--
THE PCP OR THE RADICAL LEFT--BUT RATHER FROM RIGHT-WINGERS
WHO SOUGHT TO TURN BACK THE CLOCK TO THE DAYS PRIOR TO APRIL
1974.

-- PCP COUNTEROFFENSIVE: THE LEAD EDITORIAL IN THE MAR 3
EDITION OF COMMUNIST WEEKLY "AVANTE," AFTER ECHOING CUNHAL'S
DENIALS OF PCP INVOLVEMENT IN SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES, ASSERTED
THAT A CHILEAN-STYLE DESTABILIZATION CAMPAIGN WAS UNDER WAY
IN PORTUGAL.
AUTHORS OF THE COMPAIGN, ACCORDING TO "AVANTE," ARE THE
FORCES OF IMPERIALISM AND INTERNAL REACTION, ABETTED BY
THE PS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF CAPITALIST RECOVERY. TO EMPHASIZE
THE POINT, A PCP-FRONTING "WOMENS UNITY COMMITTEE" HAS
BEEN FORMED OSTENSIBLY TO RESIST ANY WOMEN'S MARCHES A LA
CHILE.

2. COMMENT: BOTH SANTOS'S CHARGES AND THE PCP RESPONSE ARE
CALCULATED HYPERBOLE. VASCO LOURENCO'S STATEMENT, ALSO AN
EXAGGERATION, FANS THE CONTROVERSY WHILE GIVING MORE
AMMUNITION TO LOURENCO'S CRITICS AMONG THE MILITARY
"OPERATIONALS." THE PCP HAS NOT GIVEN UP ITS EFFORTS TO
INFILTRATE THE ARMED FORCES, BUT IT ALSO KNOWS THAT THE DAYS
OF THE SUV ARE PAST. ONE OF THE CHALLENGES FACING
THE PCP IN THE MONTHS AHEAD WILL BE TO EXERT SUFFICIENT
DISCIPLINE ON ITS MILITARY SYMPATHIZERS TO PREVENT THEM
FROM BEING DRAWN INTO ADVENTURISTIC ACTIONS UNDER PRESSURE
FROM MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS TO THE PCP' LEFT.

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